

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraphs [0012] and [0014], as follows:

[0012] Referring to Figures 1 and 2, the butt or handle end of a conventional fly fishing rod indicated generally at 1 includes a reel seat body 2. A reel 3 (e.g. an A.F.T.H standard reel) is mounted on the reel seat body 2 using a fixed ring or hood 4, a slidable locking ring or hood 5, and an internally threaded locking nut 6. One foot 7 of the reel 3 is slid between the seat body 2 and the fixed ring 4, and the nut 6 is rotated on the threaded end 8 of the body 2 to move the ring 5 forwardly over the other foot 9 of the reel 3. A butt cap 10 retains the locking ring 5 and the nut 6 on the reel seat body 2. As mentioned in the Background section, above, because reel 3 is secured to rod 1 using a lock located at the butt end of the rod, it is commonly referred to as an "up locking" reel. Correspondingly, and as is well-known in the art, the combination of locking ring 5 and nut 6 is often conventionally referred to as an "up locking reel lock."

[0014] With reference to Figs. 3 to 5, an assembly in accordance with the present invention includes a rod and a handle indicated generally at 21 which is defined by a smooth cylindrical sleeve 22 with a flaring front end 23, a slightly bulbous central portion 24 and a flaring rear end 25. A smooth, waisted portions 26 are provided between the central portion 24 and the flaring front and rear ends 23 and 25, respectively. A cowl 27 on the butt end of the handle 21 partially surrounds the reel seat body 2. The cowl is-12 forms a generally semi-cylindrical body, and is generally U-shaped when viewed from above (Fig. 4). The top surface of the cowl 27 forms a continuation of the flaring top surface 29 of the rear end 25 of the handle 21, and the sides-side surfaces of the cowl define continuations of the sides-side surfaces of the handle. The cowl 27 includes a convex trailing end 30, convex bottom side edges 32 and a concave shoulder 33 at the rear end 25 of the handle 21. As shown in Fig. 3, when casting, the cowl 27 prevents contact of the hand 18 with the reel seat body 2 if the hand happens to slide back to a position near the reel 3.

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